



GEORGE TYLER MOORE
CENTER FOR THE
STUDY OF THE CIVIL WAR
At Shepherd University

GEORGE TYLER MOORE
**CENTER FOR THE
STUDY OF THE CIVIL WAR** *Newsletter*

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Cecelia Mason

Civil War Christmas

Every Yuletide, GTMC opens its doors to visitors seeking a glimpse of Christmases past. The annual Civil War Christmas program will be held Saturday, December 7. This one-day, all-day event will feature a variety of living history and educational programs ranging from open-fire cooking to craftsmen presentations and a soldier's experience of the holidays in wartime. The historic Shindler House will be festooned with greenery and candles, with opportunities for casual tours led by costumed interpreters throughout the day.

While many historic structures host holiday events, Civil War Christmas is unique in that undergraduate students largely spearhead its planning and implementation. The event thus offers a unique discovery experience for the visitor as well as the student interpreters and planners.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS:

Shepherdstown's Holiday Parade

10 a.m.

Students in period costume will participate in the town's annual parade.

All-day Open House

11 a.m.-4 p.m.

A decorated Shindler House will be open for informal tours. Costumed interpreters will be placed throughout the building and on the grounds to discuss holiday traditions during the Victorian era.

What did they wear to keep warm?

11 a.m.

Costumed interpreters and public historians will offer a discussion of winter fashion and clothing among soldiers and civilians of the 19th Century.

Crafts and craftsmen in the 18th and 19th centuries

Noon

Dan Tokar, master blacksmith, will discuss craftsmen in the 18th and 19th centuries.

What did they eat?

1 p.m.

Costumed interpreters will provide a cooking demonstration over an open fire.

A Soldier's Life

2 p.m.

Costumed interpreters and public historians will discuss Civil War soldiers during the winter season.

A Civilian's Life

3 p.m.

Costumed interpreters and public historians will discuss how the Civil War impacted the experiences of civilians and slaves who lived in communities such as Shepherdstown.

A Civil War Christmas

6-8 p.m.

A decorated Shindler House will be open for informal tours and lighted by candle. Costumed interpreters will be placed throughout the building to discuss holiday traditions during the Victorian era including decorations, religious practices, entertainment, and foodways. ■



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From the Director

The George Tyler Moore Center for the Study of the Civil War (GTMC) is concluding an incredible year. I would first like to welcome Catherine Mägi Oliver to our staff. She now serves as the GTMC's administrative assistant and has proven herself to be invaluable. Catherine holds a B.A. from American University and a J.D. from the College of William and Mary Law School. She recently co-authored with Dennis Frye, *Confluence: Harpers Ferry as Destiny*.

The weather has now turned, the leaves have mostly fallen off of the trees, and the lower Shenandoah Valley is preparing for winter. This particular time of year is always my favorite. And in that spirit, the GTMC recently participated in Shepherdstown's annual Halloween night—costumed undergraduate students handed out candy to hundreds of children and their families from the historic Conrad Shindler house. We are, moreover, busily preparing for our annual Civil War Christmas program to be held December 7. This event is led by undergraduate students and Shepherd alumni each year and allows them to develop and deliver interpretive programs and interface with our wonderful community.

The GTMC successfully hosted its annual seminar October 10-13. This year's program, "A Desperate Bid: Jubal Early's 1864 Invasion," included more than 40 participants from eight states. Our generous donors supported four scholarships that allowed West Virginia University graduate student Rachael Nicholas, Shepherd University undergraduate Christian

Webb, Morgantown, High School teacher Phil Caskey, and Civil War semester participant Carolina Currey to be part of the four-day event. The seminar traveled to West Virginia, Maryland, Washington, D.C., and Virginia visiting an array of Civil War-era sites. We are planning next year's event, to be held October 8-11, 2020, that will focus on Civil War artist James Taylor's unique sketchbook and will include visitation to many of the Virginia sites he depicted.

We continue to advance our missions of education and lifelong learning by hosting public programs. Shepherd alumnus Kevin R. Pawlak spoke in August about his new book, *Postcards of America, Antietam National Battlefield*; Gettysburg College Professor of History Michael Birkner visited our campus in October to deliver a presentation on James Buchanan, his presidency, and legacy; and we partnered with the Robert C. Byrd Center for Congressional History and Education to host Charles Holden who discussed his new work, *Republican Populist: Spiro Agnew and the Origins of Donald Trump's America*.

I continue to travel to professional conferences, Civil War Round Tables, and community organizations to discuss the GTMC, the Civil War era, and my academic research and published scholarship. It is always incredibly energizing to interact with public audiences and converse about our shared passions for the Civil War era. I have, furthermore, traveled with my undergraduate students to a host of historic



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sites and powerful places this semester as part of Shepherd's immersive learning experience.

I remain extremely proud of the GTMC and our accomplishments. I want to thank each of you for the continued support and offer my warmest wishes for a wonderful holiday season.

With warmest regards,

Dr. James J. Broomall

Seminar 2019

A Desperate Bid: Jubal Early's 1864 Invasion

On a cool but comfortable weekend this past October, more than 40 participants, including four scholarship recipients, joined GTMC staff and esteemed presenters on an exploration of Confederate General Jubal Early's 1864 attempt to seize Washington, D.C.

Dennis Frye led the group from the Potomac crossing at Boteler's Ford, to the Fort Duncan outpost near Harpers Ferry. Just north of Maryland Heights, the iconic cliff-faced mountain guarding the Ferry, participants performed a short, wooded hike to the remnants of the fort that impeded Early's progress in July 1864. This was followed by a tour of Frederick's historic church-hospitals, led by Liz Shatto of the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area. Friday's

exploration culminated with a trip to Monocacy National Battlefield, where, led by Dr. Tom Clemens, the group once more encountered Early's determination to reach Washington.

On Saturday, the seminar shifted southward with Early, into the bounds of the District of Columbia itself. NPS Ranger Steve Phan introduced the group to just a few of the dozens of forts that once ringed the capital in defense. Seminar participants also enjoyed a tour of President Lincoln's Cottage, the home where the Lincoln family often sought retreat from the pressures of the White House, just under four miles away.

Finally, on Sunday, Dr. Jonathan Noyalas of Shenandoah University welcomed the group to Cool Spring Battlefield, near Berryville, Virginia.



Blackford's Ford—following Early's trail, atmospheric effects at the opening ford were provided courtesy of an intensely foggy Potomac River.

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Located across the Potomac from Harpers Ferry, Fort Duncan is now part of C & O National Historical Park.



The seminar stopped at Monocacy, often referred to as "the battle that saved Washington."

Participants learned about the battle as well as preservation efforts at the site, which had at one point been developed into a golf course.

A special addition to this year's seminar were four scholarship recipients. Phil Caskey, a teacher at Westwood Middle School in Morgantown, WV, was the visiting John Schildt Scholar. The Dennis E. Frye Visiting Scholar of Civil War Studies was Rachael Nicholas, a Ph.D. candidate at West Virginia University. Christian Webb, a Shepherd University student, received the C. Stuart McGehee Memorial Scholarship. Finally, Caroline Currey from the University of Charleston returned for her second seminar as the Civil War Semester recipient. ■



National Park Service Ranger Steve Phan discussed the role of Fort DeRussy and other fortifications surrounding Washington in defense of the city.



Dr. Jonathan Noyalas provided a stirring description of the battle at Cool Spring.

Save the Date: Next year's Civil War and American Society Seminar, tentatively titled The Art of War: James E. Taylor's View of the Valley, will be held Thursday, October 8, through Sunday, October 11. Participants will explore preserved landscapes and unique historic sites as they follow the sketch artist's journey, from John Brown's kindling of war, to Mosby country and beyond.

Recent Events



"The Bee Line March" of the Revolutionary War, in which Shepherdstown- and Winchester-based companies of Virginia riflemen raced to assist General George

Washington in Boston, was honored July 22 with a special program held at the Town Run Tap House and Community Pub in Shepherdstown. "Beeline: A Celebration" blended academic, public, and living history (provided by HM 17th Regiment of Infantry in America, 1775-1784) to discuss the complexities of patriotism and loyalty during the Revolutionary era. The well-attended event showcased the talents of Shepherd University students and faculty, museum professionals, and living historians. Moreover, a portion of proceeds from the evening benefitted the Shepherdstown Community Club and their efforts at Morgan's Grove Park. ■



In late August, **Shepherd alumnus Kevin Pawlak** returned to campus to discuss his new book, *Postcards of America, Antietam National Battlefield*. Kevin has written extensively about the Civil War era and is a tour guide in high demand. He serves as the site director of Ben Lomond Historic Site. ■

GTMC was pleased to **host a pre-game tailgate gathering** for Shepherd faculty, students, and friends during the university's Homecoming Weekend at the end of September. Shepherd's

History Department, Phi Alpha Theta, and the Living History Club all contributed to the success of the gathering, held in the backyard of the Center. ■



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Dr. Michael Birkner of Gettysburg College presented, “**Worst President Ever? James Buchanan and the Presidential Stock Exchange**” on October 24 at the Robert C. Byrd Center for Congressional History and Education. Dr. Birkner chaired the Gettysburg College history department for a decade and currently serves as College Marshall. He is the author of several books, including *The Governors of New Jersey: Biographical Essays* (2013), *McCormick of Rutgers: Scholar, Teacher, Public Historian* (2001), an edition of *The Papers of Daniel Webster: Correspondence Series* (1986), a social history of his home town of Bergenfield, New Jersey (a CHOICE outstanding academic book, 1994), and three edited volumes on President James Buchanan. The latest, co-edited work, is titled *The Worlds of James Buchanan and Thaddeus Stevens* (2019). ■

Dr. Charles Holden, history professor at St. Mary’s College of Maryland, **presented “Spiro Agnew: Republican Populist”** on November 7 in a program co-sponsored by the Robert C. Byrd Center for Congressional History and Education. Dr. Holden is the author of *In the Great Maelstrom: Conservatives in Post-Civil War*

South Carolina (2002) and *The New Southern University: Academic Freedom and Liberalism at UNC* (2011). He is also a co-author on a forthcoming book about Spiro Agnew and the roots of today’s Republican party. ■

Over the course of the fall semester, **Dr. Broomall variously journeyed with his Civil War Seminar and Battlefield Preservation** classes and/or student groups to a variety of Civil War era sites. They had an excellent tour of downtown Frederick, Maryland,



in mid-September. Jake Wynn and Travis Shaw led participants through two centuries of history, demonstrating how war transformed an urban area and the lives of its inhabitants. They also visited Antietam National Battlefield later that month—Ranger Keith Snyder offered an interactive tour that highlighted park management and educational interpretation. In October, Dennis Frye exposed students to the perils of development through a discussion of battlefield preservation at Harpers Ferry. Also in



October, classes traveled to Manassas National Battlefield Park where Superintendent Brandon Bies discussed the recent discovery of human



remains and limbs on the battlefield, and Cool Spring Battlefield, managed by Shenandoah University and the McCormick Civil War Institute, where Professor Jonathan Noyalas walked us through the rehabilitation of a battlefield that had become a 20th-century golf course. ■

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